

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information playback apparatus comprising:
a first acquisition unit configured to acquire
contents from an information storage medium;

5 a second acquisition unit configured to acquire
expansion information from at least one of the
information storage medium and an external apparatus
via a communication line;

a storage unit configured to store the expansion
10 information acquired by the second acquisition unit in
accordance with a type of information; and

a playback unit configured to play back the
contents acquired by the first acquisition unit, and
to play back the expansion information stored in the
15 storage unit in synchronism with playback of the
contents.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
contents contain a title assigned with a title number,

the title contains predetermined playback
20 information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one
segmented expansion information,

one segmented expansion information contains
header information and main body expansion information,

25 the header information contains a title number and
time information, and

the playback unit plays back predetermined main

body expansion information on the basis of the title
number and time information contained in the header
information of the segmented expansion information in
synchronism with playback of predetermined playback
5 information contained in the title of the contents.

3. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
the contents contain a chapter assigned with a chapter
number,

the chapter contains predetermined playback
10 information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one
segmented expansion information,

one segmented expansion information contains
header information and main body expansion information,

15 the header information contains a chapter number
and time information, and

the playback unit plays back predetermined main
body expansion information on the basis of the chapter
number and time information contained in the header
20 information of the segmented expansion information in
synchronism with playback of predetermined playback
information contained in the chapter of the contents.

4. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
expansion information contains at least one segmented
25 expansion information,

one segmented expansion information contains
header information and main body expansion information,

the header information contains an index time that indicates a relative time from the head of the main body expansion information, and position information indicating a position in the main body expansion information corresponding to the index time, and

5 the playback unit plays back information at a predetermined position in predetermined main body expansion information on the basis of the index time and position information contained in the header information of the segmented expansion information in
10 synchronism with playback of the contents.

5. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the storage unit comprises first and second storage units which store a predetermined type of expansion information of the expansion information acquired by
15 the second acquisition unit, and

the first and second storage units alternately store and output a plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information which form the predetermined type
20 of expansion information.

6. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the storage unit comprises first and second storage units which store one of first and second types of expansion information of the expansion information acquired by
25 the second acquisition unit,

when the first type of expansion information is to be stored, the first and second storage units

alternately store and output a plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information which form the first type of expansion information, and

when the second type of expansion information is
5 to be stored, memory spaces of the first and second storage units are integrated to store and output the second type of expansion information.

7. An information playback method comprising:
acquiring expansion information from at least
10 one of an information storage medium and an external apparatus via a communication line;

storing, in a storage unit, the expansion information in accordance with a type of information;
and

15 playing back the contents acquired from the information storage medium, and playing back the expansion information stored in the storage unit in synchronism with playback of the contents.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the
20 contents contain a title assigned with a title number,
the title contains predetermined playback information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one segmented expansion information,

25 one segmented expansion information contains header information and main body expansion information,
the header information contains a title number and

time information, and

predetermined main body expansion information is
played back on the basis of the title number and time
information contained in the header information of
5 the segmented expansion information in synchronism
with playback of predetermined playback information
contained in the title of the contents.

9. A method according to claim 7, wherein the
contents contain a chapter assigned with a chapter
10 number,

the chapter contains predetermined playback
information assigned with time information,

the expansion information contains at least one
segmented expansion information,

15 one segmented expansion information contains
header information and main body expansion information,
the header information contains a chapter number
and time information, and

predetermined main body expansion information is
20 played back on the basis of the chapter number and time
information contained in the header information of the
segmented expansion information in synchronism with
playback of predetermined playback information
contained in the chapter of the contents.

25 10. A method according to claim 7, wherein the
expansion information contains at least one segmented
expansion information,

one segmented expansion information contains header information and main body expansion information,

the header information contains an index time that indicates a relative time from the head of the main

5 body expansion information, and position information indicating a position in the main body expansion information corresponding to the index time, and

information at a predetermined position in predetermined main body expansion information is played
10 back on the basis of the index time and position information contained in the header information of the segmented expansion information in synchronism with playback of the contents.

11. A method according to claim 7, wherein
15 the storage unit comprises first and second storage units which store a predetermined type of expansion information of the expansion information acquired by the second acquisition unit, and

the method further comprises alternately storing a
20 plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information which form the predetermined type of expansion information in the first and second storage units, and alternately outputting the plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information from the first and
25 second storage units.

12. A method according to claim 7, wherein the storage unit comprises first and second storage units

which store one of first and second types of expansion information of the expansion information acquired by the second acquisition unit, and

the method further comprises:

- 5 alternately storing, when the first type of expansion information is to be stored, a plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information which form the first type of expansion information in the first and second storage units, and alternately outputting
10 the plurality of pieces of segmented expansion information from the first and second storage units, and

 integrating, when the second type of expansion information is to be stored, memory spaces of the first
15 and second storage units, storing the second type of expansion information in the integrated memory space of the first and second storage units, and outputting the second type of expansion information from the integrated memory space of the first and second storage
20 units.

13. An information playback apparatus comprising:

a first acquisition unit configured to acquire contents from an information storage medium;

- 25 a second acquisition unit configured to acquire expansion information made up of a plurality of segmented files from an external apparatus via a communication line for respective segmented files, each

segmented file having a data field that stores audio
information as playback information and a header field
that stores control information of the segmented file,
and the control information having title information
5 and chapter information of contents and time
information indicating a time from the beginning of
a title or the head of a chapter, and

a playback unit configured to play back the
contents acquired by the first acquisition unit, and
10 to play back the audio information in the data field
acquired by the second acquisition unit in accordance
with the control information stored in the header field
in synchronism with the contents.